

FEBRUARY

at the

CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

FEBRUARY MEETING

Date: Tuesday, February 23, 8:15 p.m.

Place: Morrison Auditorium

Speaker: John D. Bulger

Subject: "NEW ENGLAND SAGA"

New England is a region of rugged beauty not to be matched in character anywhere in the world. Dr. Bulger's narrative in color, the third in the current series of Audubon Screen Tours, captures this beauty throughout the four seasons of the calendar. From the blue-green waters of Lake Champlain reflecting the Adirondacks, to the bustling busyness of Boston, his camera traces patterns of alteration on the land and in the water, which circumstance leads to the decline of some animals and the adaptations of others.

Over the years, Dr. Bulger's expert camera has focused on wildlife from the depths of the African bush to the ice floes of the Arctic Ocean.

MORRISON PLANETARIUM

"MEN INTO SPACE", the story behind the Gemini program, begins February 3 and will play at the Theatre of the Stars through February 28. This topical sky show explores how man gathered the necessary knowledge and solved the problems peculiar to this manned orbital flight. Performances daily at 3:30 p. m. with evening shows, Wednesday through Sunday, at 8:30. Extra matinees at 2:00 on Saturday and Sunday. The Planetarium is closed on Monday and Tuesday evenings.

MORRISON AUDITORIUM

The California Academy of Sciences Science Theatre continues to present its documentary, "THE SEA OF CORTEZ", on Saturdays and Sundays at 12:45, 2:15, and 3:45 p. m. Admission: Adults, 75¢, Juniors, 40¢.

SPECIAL EXHIBITS

Exhibit of the Month: "AFRICAN GAZELLE" from the Academy collections. Main Foyer, Science Museum.

"NATURE PHOTOGRAPHS" by Ken Legg, will be on display in Lovell White Hall of Man and Nature through March 31.

"SCIENCE IN ACTION" (Schedule for viewers in the San Francisco Bay Area: Tuesday evenings, 6:30 p. m., KTVU-TV, Channel 2. For other areas, see the TV listings in your local paper).

February 2: "MATHEMATICA", with Guest Scientist Dr. William F. Fitzgerald, Director, California Museum of Science and Industry, Los Angeles.

February 9: "BIRD ISLAND", with Lewis Wayne Walker, Assistant Director, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Tucson.

February 16: "LEGAL PSYCHIATRY", with Bernard L. Diamond, M. D., Professor of Criminology and Law, University of California, Berkeley.

February 23: "SCIENCE IN THE CLASSROOM", with Dr. Robert Karplus, University of California, and Director of Science Curriculum Improvement Study.

NEWS and NOTES

Treasures about its history not known previously to exist have, after many decades, come home to rest at the Academy. Both of them, coincidentally, deal directly with the founder and first president, Dr. Andrew Randall, one of the seven men responsible for creating the CAS on that memorable evening of April 4, 1853.

The first, an original document, is a resolution which honored Dr. Randall at the time of his death. It is dated July 28, 1856. It was declared four days after Dr. Randall's murder, an act committed by a gambler named Joseph Hetherington who subsequently was hanged by the Vigilance Committee.

The Randall Resolution contains biographical information about the Academy's founder which was not known before.

The second treasure, an oil portrait, is an excellent picture of this most unusual man. No other likeness has been available and none was known to exist.

Both of these unique gifts have come to the Academy through the kind generosity of three of Dr. Randall's descendants: Miss Nellie Randall of Chatsworth, Mrs. Olga Randall of Eagle Rock, and Mr. Arthur Randall of Fallbrook, California. Acquisition was made possible by the good efforts of Mr. Clay P. Butler, Research Associate in the Department of Astronomy at the Academy.

At some later date, it is planned to have a public exhibit of these treasures which the membership will be able to enjoy.

By way of furthering the 1964-1965 Oaxaca Project, as it has become known, Director of the Academy, George E. Lindsay, and Associate Director and Curator of Birds and Mammals, Robert T. Orr, flew to Mexico City on January 3. Before leaving for southern Mexico, Drs. Lindsay and Orr conferred with Dr. Rudolfo Hernandez Corzo, Director General de la Fauna Silvestre, and presented him with duplicate specimens of material taken during CAS Mexican expeditions of the past year and at the same time obtained new permits for work during the current year. They also visited with fellow scientists at the Instituto de Biologia, including Dr. Alejandro Villalobos F., who had been a participant with them in the recent Sea of Cortez Expedition.

Then it was on to the State of Oaxaca and the joining of forces with Research Associate J. Stuart Rowley and his wife who will remain in Mexico until late summer. (See NEWSLETTER, December 1964). The party, during the brief ten days, visited the major biotic areas of the region, collecting and photographing birds and mammals in the pine-oak association, the cloud forest, and the tropical evergreen and the deciduous evergreen forests. Some 400 pictures were taken of the region and its vertebrate inhabitants including many of the Mixtepec Indians who live in these rugged mountains between the great plateau of Mexico and the isthmus of Tehuantepec.

On January 7 at 9:57 a. m. when the three scientists were concentrating with cameras and field glasses on a rare species of hummingbird, they experienced a sharp tremor which lasted some seconds. Dr. Orr's comment was that "I am almost positive we were in the exact epicenter!" To corroborate the incident, the party returned with pictures of fissures created by the earthquake.

During the stay, a visit was paid to certain swift caves which continue to be under observation all during the Oaxaca Project. Major plant associations were plotted and correlated with the distribution of the avifauna. An interesting sidelight was seeing a host of wintering warblers, many of which are summer residents in northern California.

The Oaxaca Project is a joint effort of the Academy, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Western Foundation

of Vertebrate Zoology in Los Angeles. Collected material will be divided among the three organizations and representation sent to the Mexican Government.

RECENT SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

PROCEEDINGS

"BATS FROM ISLANDS IN THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA." Robert T. Orr and Richard C. Banks. Vol. XXX, No. 10. December 31, 1964. 25¢

"SEA OF CORTEZ EXPEDITION OF THE CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, June 20-July 4, 1964." George E. Lindsay. Vol. XXX, No. 11. December 31, 1964. \$1.00

"PHYLLOPHAGA SAYLORI, N. SP., FROM NUEVO LEON, MEXICO (COLEOPTERA: SCARABAEIDAE)." Milton W. Sanderson. Vol. XXXI, No. 20. January 15, 1965. 25¢

The February 1965 issue of National Geographic Magazine contains an unusual article by the Academy's Curator of Entomology, Edward S. Ross. Entitled "Birds That 'See' in the Dark with Their Ears", the narrative and color photographs are concerned with the South American guácharo, or oilbirds (*Steatornis carpiensis*), which Dr. Ross observed and photographed during his recent trip to the upper reaches of the Amazon River to Cueva de las Lechuzas which overlooks the Monzón Valley near the remote Peruvian town of Tingo Maria.

These particular avian oddities navigate by echo in the blackness of their cave home.

THE SUPPLY IS RUNNING OUT

of PACIFIC DISCOVERY, Volume 15, No. 4, July-August 1962. Any member who is willing to relinquish his copy should mail it directly to the Academy. It will be appreciated.

The Academy would like to use this means to express its thanks to those members who voluntarily raised their membership category as was suggested in the December notices of dues. This added financial support for the Academy is more than welcome. Every little bit adds up to largess. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

From the Academy Collections



When Darwin's great work, On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, was first published on the 24th of November 1859, the 1250 copies were sold out the first day. Darwin had already advanced his new views in 1857 in a letter to the American botanist, Asa Gray, and had published an abstract of his work along with A. R. Wallace's essay in the Journal of the Linnean Society. As the sales showed, interest was at a keen pitch.

In the subsequent editions Darwin was forced to mollify and modify although Mendel's later work strongly buttressed Darwin's revolution-ary thesis: Over long periods of time, natural variations, in a context of the struggle to exist, lead to the creation of essentially new species. Here in this first edition is the clearest, most forceful and uncompromising statement of his be-liefs. Earlier, he himself had written, "...I am almost convinced (quite contrary to the opinion I started with) that species are not (it is like con-fessing a murder) immutable."

Darwin is also important because of his concept of how the scientist operates: "I have steadily endeavoured to keep my mind free so as to give up any hypothesis, however much beloved (and I cannot resist forming one on every subject), as soon as facts are shown to be opposed to it."

The initial impetus to Darwin's thinking was undoubtedly the 5-year voyage as the naturalist on HMS Beagle, 1831-36, during which the ship touched on nearly every continent and major island while circling the world. No region he visited im-pressed him as much as the Galapagos Islands with its giant tortoises, enormous crabs and huge lizards long since extinct in other parts of the world. The entire period from 1836 to the publication of his findings was spent in collecting facts, observing and reflecting at length on the facts he found.

From the pictures of the Academy's first edition, one can see an undistinguished volume. The stamped binding and ordinary typography are characteristic of the ugliness of Victorian printing, a period often regarded by historians of the book as one of the low spots looking at the book as an artistic product. Nonetheless, this is one of the greatest treasures of the Academy library. The generosity of Susanna Bixby Bryant made possible the addition of this esteemed rare book in 1959 during the centennial celebration of the publication of Darwin's controversial work.

(Photos by Maurice Giles, CAS) Ray Brian

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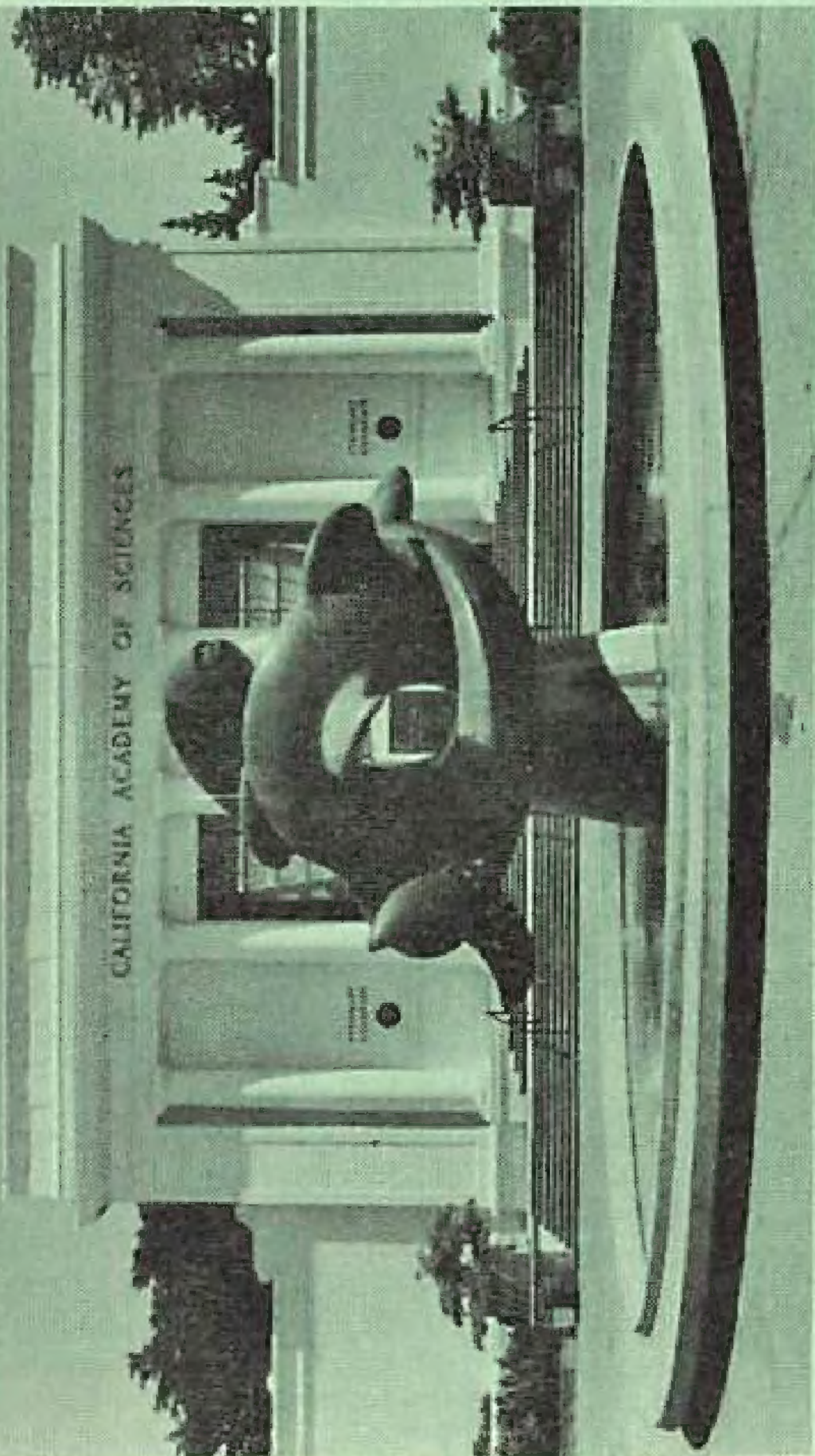
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